

[Elspeth A. Gould Diary](#)

GOULD, ELSPETH A., 1885-1962.

Elspeth A. Gould diary, 1917 May 14 – 1918 January 29.

1 volume (85 pages)

#M-0080

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Elspeth Anne Gould, nurse, was born January 29, 1885 in Rochester, New York to William and Annie Gould. After her father's death the next year, Gould's widowed mother returned to her hometown of Carleton Place, Ontario where Elspeth was raised. Gould attended the Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing (later the Columbia University School of Nursing) from which she graduated in 1909. She became a head nurse at Presbyterian Hospital and then Second Assistant Superintendent at the Hospital's School of Nursing.

In May 1917 Gould went overseas as Assistant Chief Nurse of the Presbyterian Hospital unit, United States Base Hospital No. 2, assigned to Étretat in the Normandy region of France. Because it took over General Hospital No. 1 of the British Expeditionary Force, Base Hospital No. 2 is sometimes referred to by that designation. To add to the confusion, the hospital was originally organized as American Red Cross Hospital No. 1. Nevertheless, its official U.S. title was Base Hospital No. 2. Though staffed by Americans, the majority of the hospital's patients continued to be British servicemen.

After returning to the U.S. in 1919, Gould spent the early 1920s as a nurse at the Standard Oil Company's hospital in Tampico, Mexico. She spent the remainder of her career as a private duty nurse in New York City. She died on December 26, 1962 in New York and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

SCOPE AND CONTENT: Diary recounting Gould's experiences as Assistant Chief Nurse at U.S. Base Hospital No. 2 in Étretat, France. It begins with the departure of the nurses from New York City on May 14, 1917 and ends on January 29, 1918, her 33rd birthday. With the diary are several pieces of paper that note significant events at the hospital through November 27, 1918, though they are not full diary entries. Gould writes regularly, though not daily.

As Assistant Chief Nurse, Gould shared with the Chief Nurse, Janet B. Christie, the responsibility for overseeing the 65 nurses (later increased to 100) who provided care for the wounded British soldiers being treated there. Though Gould frequently mentions the arrival at the hospital of convoys of the wounded and their numbers, the diary generally focuses on her leisure activities: the arrival of visitors; teas, parties, and dances; shopping in Rouen; and walks and visits to neighboring towns and villages. At one point she writes "this is really a very strenuous social life not much like war except when a train [of wounded] comes in..." Although

an American citizen through her father, Gould considered herself a Canadian and makes particular note of Canadian visitors and, sometimes, patients.

LANGUAGE: English.

ACCESS: Open.

LOCATION: Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Box 6, folder 5.

PROVENANCE: Transfer from the Columbia University School of Nursing, 2016(acc. #2016.005). A note in the volume indicates that in 1975 the diary was in the possession of Anne Penland (Nursing, 1912), a fellow Base Hospital No. 2 nurse of Gould's, at which time she gave it to Margaret Wells (Nursing, 1929). Wells presumably donated it to the School of Nursing at a later date.

RELATED RECORDS: Archives & Special Collections also holds the papers of F. Esther Fortune (Nursing 1916), who served as a nurse at Base Hospital No. 2. They include her World War I diary, letters, photos, and memorabilia: <http://library-archives.cumc.columbia.edu/finding-aid/f-esther-fortune-papers-1917-1960-bulk-1917-1919>

A transcript of the diary of Fred Junkin Hinkhouse, a Base Hospital No. 2 orderly, is also available: <http://library-archives.cumc.columbia.edu/finding-aid/fred-junkin-hinkhouse-diary-1917-1918>

Archives & Special Collections has an almost complete set of the Base Hospital No. 2 newspaper, *The Dooins*: <http://library-archives.cumc.columbia.edu/finding-aid/dooins-1917-1918>

The World War I scrapbook of George Emerson Brewer, the Commanding Officer of Base Hospital No. 2, is also available: <http://library-archives.cumc.columbia.edu/finding-aid/george-emerson-brewer-scrapbook-1903-1913-1923-bulk-1917-1919>

Both Archives & Special Collections and the Columbia University libraries' general circulating collection hold copies of *Nobody Ever Wins a War: The World War I Diaries of Ella Mae Bongard, R.N.*, the published diaries of Base Hospital No. 2 nurse.

Subjects

Gould, Elspeth, 1885-1962.

Nurses – United States – Diaries.

United States. Army Nurse Corps.

United States Army Hospital, no. 2.

World War, 1914-1918 – Hospitals – France – Étretat.

World War, 1914-1918 – Hospitals, charities, etc.

World War, 1914-1918 – Personal narratives, American.

World War, 1914-1918 – Personal narratives, Canadian.

World War, 1914-1918 – Medical care – France.

Hospitals, Military – World War I.

Military Nursing.

Diaries.